

I am writing to express my concern regarding possible quotas or restricted distribution of Oxycontin. I am a nurse with 24 years experience, the past 3 ½ years in pain management nursing. Over the years I have witnessed countless patients suffer pain needlessly. This includes acute pain as well as debilitating chronic pain. My practice now consists of chronic pain patients only. It is because of these patients that I have chosen to speak out. I feel that Oxycontin is a drug that has brought pain management into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Oxycontin is a time release form of oxycodone. Oxycodone is a drug that has been used for pain control for over 50 years. It is this time release action of Oxycontin that makes it such a good drug. Most pain medicines give about 4 to 6 hours pain relief. This causes peaks and valleys in pain control. By this I mean that patients get a burst of pain relief from a short acting medication but then the effect wears off. It takes another dose of medication to get another burst of pain relief. By taking Oxycontin, the patient has a 12 hour sustained relief period. There is a steady level of medication thus avoiding peaks and valleys. It is this sustained relief that allows chronic pain patients to become more functional. Often pain is a limiting factor in a patients ability to do even the most basic tasks. I have witnessed dramatic improvements in patients quality of life while taking Oxycontin. Pain not only disrupts the patients life but the entire family is affected. By improving the quality of life for the patient you also improve the quality of the family's life. Many patients are even able to return to the workforce. Limiting Oxycontin would take a toll on productivity in the workplace.

Pain is known to be undertreated in the U.S. There was a study conducted by the American Medical Association using information partly derived from DEA that found the increased prescribing of powerful pain killers did not increase drug abuse. I feel that restricting the use of Oxycontin will cause shortages of the drug which thus in turn will cause an increase in the black market potential. Desperate patients will take drastic measures to seek the pain relief that they have come to know. It would be an injustice to deprive these patients the medication that their doctor has prescribed for them. I implore you to not place restrictions on the legitimate use of Oxycontin for pain control.

Sincerely,

*Cathy C-Asche RN,BSN*

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